

Business today

EDITORIAL:
susanwindram@
tweeddalepress.co.uk
ADVERTISING:
01289 306677

dotbiz



ANDREW
MCEWAN

YOU may have read recently that, according to the latest statistics from the Office of Fair Trading (OFT), one in 10 people who buy tickets to concerts, etc have been left disappointed by fake websites. OFT are now launching a campaign to show people how they can protect themselves.

Stats like that will only serve to make people even more wary about handing over their credit-card details online, and rightly so.

How does this relate to you if you're selling online? Well, if prospective customers even catch a whiff that your site is not all it claims to be – even though you are a perfectly legitimate business, it is highly likely that they will move on to the next site in their search results.

Here's a personal example – we

were looking to buy some perfume online, and found just what we wanted at a reasonable price. The site looked very professional and all was well until we reached the checkout page where we were asked for payment card details.

Whenever you are shopping online and are asked for these details, you should always be on a secure page – the website address should begin with 'https' instead of 'http', and there should be a small locked padlock symbol displayed on your browser – where it will depend on which browser you use. The problem with this site was that we were not on a secure page, so the purchase ground to an immediate halt!

Now, this piqued my curiosity – was this a dodgy website? Instead of moving on to another site, we had another look at the company's contact

details – they provided a business address with landline telephone number, along with VAT and limited company registration numbers. BT's online phonebook confirmed their address and phone number, and a quick look on Companies House webcheck showed that the company did exist and had been in business for some years.

I called their customer service number and spoke to their resident technical guru who was perplexed and somewhat horrified to hear what had happened on their shiny new website. After some mutual detective work, between us we discovered that a faulty link on their shopping basket page was sending customers to a non-secure page. The problem was quickly rectified, and as a thank you he arranged for some free samples to be

mailed along with our order – a very nice bit of PR there. Now, how many orders could this company have lost due to customers leaving the site when reaching the non-secure payment page having followed the same path that we did?

So, a cautionary tale for anyone selling online – test your website until you are sure that there is nothing left to test, then test it again.

Give your customers everything they need to feel 100 per cent confident about shopping with you. Provide them with all the information that you should be giving by law anyway, but be sure to provide a landline telephone number that will be answered by someone that can deal with their enquiry.

Why not let customers leave reviews? Reading about the positive experiences that other people have had

will add to your credibility; dealing in a positive and constructive way with any negative reviews will show that you care about your customers and go out of your way to rectify any problems.

That's just a couple of examples. When the difference between making a sale and losing out is as arbitrary as the click of a mouse, it is essential that you have done everything you can to help the customer decide to shop with you.

And remember – when they have shopped with you once, chances are that they will come back and keep coming back.

Andrew McEwan of *The Web Workshop in Morebattle* (www.thewebworkshop.net) designs websites and markets businesses in the Borders and beyond.

Berwick businesses buck financial trend

DESPITE the recession, two companies have taken up new office and retail space at Berwick industrial estates, writes Adam Drummond.

Internet-based pharmacy, Grays Pharmacy Direct, has purchased a 2250sq ft office at the Ramparts Business Park.

Grays Pharmacy Direct is a new venture for a local firm.

It will specialise in dispensing NHS prescriptions and selling over-the-counter medicines via the phone and its website www.grayspharmacydirect.co.uk.

Andrew Gray, partner of Grays Pharmacy Direct said: "The Ramparts Business Park is an ideal location for our new business, with easy access to the town and A1 for deliveries."

Nick Green, of commercial letting agents Edwin Thompson, who are joint agents for Gladman Developments, commented: "This is the second disposal of office space at Ramparts

Business Park in as many months.

More and more businesses are becoming aware of it and are taking advantage of the flexible terms being offered to establish themselves at this first-class location."

Edwin Thompson, has also just concluded the letting of 71/73 Tweedside Trading Estate to Hose World Ltd, one of the UK's largest and fastest growing importers, distributors and manufacturers of hose, ducting and tubing.

The 14,347sq ft industrial unit has been let on a five-year lease with an option to buy at a predetermined price at any point during the five-year term.

The unit will be the company's new headquarters.

David Adam, managing director of Hose World said: "Our new premises will allow us to increase the depth and range of our stock and offer trade counter service to local businesses."



SPRAY IT AGAIN: Gavin Warnock at work in his inflatable booth.

Gavin causes quite a stir

A DUNS man is causing quite a stir across the Borders, with a new way of repairing cars.

Instead of slaving away in a garage, Gavin Warnock (29) is going about his trade in an inflatable booth used for vehicle repairs and spray painting.

He is the first person in Scotland to adopt this method of working, but the innovative product has already proved to be a massive success in the USA.

Gavin set up his company with the help of Business Gateway, Scottish Borders. Based in Selkirk, Warnock's Automotive Spray Paint Solutions (W.A.S.P.S) has been an unusual sight in many streets and car parks in the last month with scores of people wanting bodywork repairs.

The versatile booth can be erected in less than 10 minutes and can be used in any location which saves the customer booking their car into a garage.

Instead Gavin can park outside their

house, workplace or office car park to do the job and he said that this is proving to be a big selling point.

Gavin commented: "I've been doing spray painting for years and worked in various auto body shops but I've always wanted to be my own boss."

"I stumbled across the booth in a car magazine and after speaking to some people I knew in the car industry I decided to go for it."

"The fact that I go to the customer is a real incentive for them and it means they don't have to take a day off work or rearrange their schedule. I can come to their house or office car park and get the work done while they go about their daily business."

Wherever Gavin has been working in the region, crowds of people have gathered around him intrigued by his work space and wanting to know more about the service he offers.

Many of these interested spectators have now turned into customers after being impressed with what they've seen.

As a newcomer to running his own business, Gavin went along to his local Business Gateway office to seek support in getting his business idea on the road.

He added: "I approached my local Business Gateway office and asked them for help with my business plan and I attended some of the events which were great not only for learning purposes but also for networking."

Sandra Campbell, Business Adviser, Business Gateway Scottish Borders said: "Gavin proves that new and unusual ideas can make great business opportunities."

"Wherever he goes the booth generates interest and this has resulted in customers. We helped Gavin with his business plan and gave him advice on how to target clients. He also knows we are always here to support him in any way he needs."

Gordon celebrates 40 years of service with Plexus

KELSO employee Gordon Robertson is celebrating 40 years service this month.

In recognition of his loyal service to date, Gordon was presented with a certificate and gift by Willie Mackinnon, managing director of Plexus UK. The presentation was attended by 25 of his colleagues and the UK management team.

Willie Mackinnon, managing director Plexus UK commented: "Forty years of service is an outstanding achievement. We greatly appreciate Gordon's hard work, commitment and loyal service over such a long period of time."

Gordon originally began working for Bepi Engineering in August 1969 which later became Pye Borders and then

Keltek before being acquired by Plexus.

Gordon began his career in the stores, initially as part of a team of two, and he continues to work in stores today as a manufacturing associate, although now part of a much larger team.

During his years of service he has seen many changes computerisation of the stores systems being the most significant.

Great Customer Service?

Take a moment to think... How do you think your customers rate the customer service your organisation provides?

Take a moment to consider... Satisfied customers come back! Dissatisfied customers go elsewhere...but they also tell people why!

Why not take another moment... If you are interested in improving the standard of customer service your organisation offers, we can help you go the extra mile.

BC Consultants is now offering employers and employees in the Borders a new opportunity: the delivery of a certificated SQA unit, 'Make Customer Service Personal', from the SVQ in Customer Service.

The unit will be assessed in the workplace and tailored to meet the needs of individuals and organisations. It may also attract funding (see below).

ILA Scotland is a Scottish Government Scheme that helps you pay for learning that you can do at a time, place, pace and in a way to suit you. It's for people who have an income of £22,000 a year or less, or who are on benefits.

For further information, contact BC Consultants on 01896 662571



www.bcconsultants.co.uk
BC Consultants is a wholly owned subsidiary of Borders College

Accountancy & Tax Services

+ Personal
+ Business
+ Advisory

RENNIE WELCH

accountants • audit • tax • investment • IT

Practical Advice .
Personal Assistance

If you would like to know more about our services please contact our office at any time

ACADEMY HOUSE .
SHEDDEN PARK ROAD . KELSO .
ROXBURGHSHIRE TD5 7AL
TEL: 01573 224391 FAX: 01573 225884
EMAIL: mail@rennielwelch.co.uk
WEBSITE: www.rennielwelch.co.uk

Registered to carry on audit work and regulated for a range of investment & business activities by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland

Commercial

Development Prospect

The Kingdom Hall
Tweedmouth

An interesting and substantial landmark development prospect in the Conservation Area of Tweedmouth offering scope for a variety of residential or commercial uses - subject to Planning Consent.

Price: £150,000
Ref:BJ1013

Warehouse/Retail Unit

Riverside Works
Jedburgh

A modern steel framed warehouse building, with substantial yard/car park area in a prominent trading position adjacent to the northern entrance to Jedburgh, with access from the A68 trunk road. GEA 368.2 sqm (3,960 sqm) or thereby.

Guide Rent £12,000pa
Ref:H370

Office Suites

Enterprise House
Galashiels

A new three storey office development with floorplates of 466 sqm (5,015 sqft), which can be subdivided to provide smaller suites from 1,000 sqft. The site benefits from, full disabled access, passenger lift, LG3 lighting and generous on-site parking.
First floor suite east NOW LET.

Joint agents - Rydens, Edinburgh Tel. 0131 225 6612
Rental on application
Ref:G12a

Commercial Unit

Netherdale
Galashiels

Versatile unit occupying a level site in a central location approx one mile to the east of Galashiels town centre. The property is considered suitable for a variety of uses including light industrial, retail warehousing and haulage/distribution subject to obtaining necessary planning consent.
GIA 384.4 sqm (4,135 sqft).

Rental on application
Ref:C451(g)

Office Suite

The New Fish Market
Eyemouth

Excellent fully serviced first floor office accommodation on prominent waterfront location with good access and parking. Shared kitchen and WC facilities. Benefits from a disabled passenger access lift. Rent includes gas, electricity, water, cleaning and buildings insurance.

Rent: £4,700pa
Ref:BE1011

Edwin
Thompson

Berwick Upon Tweed
Carlisle
Galashiels
Kerwick
Preston
Widmerere

Berwick Upon Tweed 01289 304432
Galashiels 01896 751300
www.edwin-thompson.co.uk

Chartered Surveyors